

REMINISCENCES

There is a tombstone up at the Mayflower Cemetery which reads as follows:

Asenath
Widow of
Simeon Soule
Died
February 25, 1865
aged 87 years and 11 months
and 19 days
The Chisel can't
Help her any.

This was the mother of Charles, nicknamed Bidley Soule. "He lived originally in the large square house on the Point, now known as the Simeon Soule House, but about 1876 or 1877 he lived in a little shoe shop that used to stand at the corner of Cedar and Cove streets. He was never known to take a bath or even wash his face. His clothing was usually in rags, of a dirt-colored brown, no stockings, and his feet thrust into heavy shoes, unlaced. He had a shock of thick black hair, and, even when mowing in the hottest summer days, wore no hat. He had a certain caustic humor of his own, and woe betide the one who felt its sting. It is said that a certain lady, not renowned for her beauty, but who was rather inclined to be sarcastic, once said to him as he shuffled past in his filth and rags, 'Well, you are a pretty-looking object.' He turned, made her a sweeping bow, and said, 'I'm sorry I can't say the same for you, Ma'am!' He was dirty, and paid so little attention to sanitary arrangements that the Board of Health finally built him a little house in the hollow between the hill on the corner of Cove and Garden streets and Abram's Hill to which they removed him. He dignified this tiny cottage with the name of Twin Mountain House, and there he lived till he died. It is said that his death was caused by the doctor forcing him to take a bath. (Out in Michigan the story is told of a man who was forcibly bathed by the authorities who after removing a number of layers of dier, uncovered a flannel shirt, buried in the dirt many years before and lost track of. Similarly, it was related that after the thorough cleansing the man died.) He used to sit in the door of the little shoe-shop on Cedar street with a big bowl of chowder in his lap, eating his dinner, while at least eleven cats played around the doorstep. My father joked with him a good deal, and Bidley used to invite him to dinner as he went by. I can remember tugging at my father's hand to get him by, I was so afraid he would stop and dine with him, and the dinner didn't look attractive. 'Bidley' put up a stone in memory to his mother, Asenath Soule, with the inscription, "The chisel can't help her any". (Duxbury Budget)